

VERIFICATION OF TRANSLATION

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declare that I am well acquainted with both the French and English languages, and that the attached is a literal translation, to the best of my knowledge and ability, of the International Application No. PCT/FR00/01361, filed May 19, 2000.

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FLEXIBLE CONTAINER WITH A SEALABLE CLOSURE

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The present invention relates to a flexible container with a sealable closure.

5 It is particularly adapted to bathers who wish to keep their valuables with them when they engage in nautical activities such as swimming, diving, windsurfing, or the like, but can lend itself to numerous applications in a number of fields whenever a sealed envelope which can be opened and closed as often as possible is desired.

10 A large number of devices adapted to protect objects against water currently exist. In particular, belts comprising one or a plurality of waterproof compartments are known, but these are relatively expensive and cumbersome systems, the use of which can become generalized only with difficulty.

15 French Patents No. FR 2 513 864 and No. FR 2 517 183, filed by the Applicant, disclose a flattened flexible waterproof case comprising on one of its surfaces a cutout into which a rigid cover fits due to a groove arranged either on the periphery of this cutout, or on the periphery of the cover.

20 The necessity of having to insert the cover into the groove of the case, or the edges of the cutout into that of the cover makes the operations of opening and closing difficult, and the cover may be lost.

25 Moreover, since this type of device is adapted more specifically for use on the beach, there is a risk of grains of sand becoming lodged in the grooves, compromising the waterproofness of the unit.

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30 Another patent, No. FR 2 760 949, filed by the same inventor, describes a flattened case that is waterproof, in particular to sea water, which opens by mere pressure on the side ends of the edges causing them to move apart, related to the protection of various objects, such as coins, bank notes, keys, identity papers against water, perspiration, sand, dust, etc., and comprising compressible joints arranged on the inner surface of the edges of the opening, arranged so as to make said case absolutely waterproof when no pressure is exerted, steel strips providing the closing force being incorporated between the walls of the

case and the joints.

However, the principle used only makes it possible to obtain small sized wallets, which considerably limits the scope of application of this system.

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One of the objects of the present invention is to remedy this disadvantage. Indeed, it makes it possible to make bags or wallets of all types and sizes, with an absolutely waterproof closure.

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It is constituted of an envelope with impermeable walls, open at its upper portion and comprising two rigid parallel bars which can fit tightly around the edges of the opening in order to seal it, at least one of these bars being fixed to a closure flap of the envelope, means for locking in tight position being arranged at both ends of these bars.

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In the annexed drawings, provided by way of non-limiting examples of embodiments of the object of the invention:

Figure 1 shows an isometric perspective of an open wallet comprising only one sealing joint,

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Figure 2 shows an end view of the same wallet, closed along the arrow F1 of the previous Figure,

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Figure 3 is a transverse vertical cross-section of a wallet identical to that of Figure 1, but comprising two sealing joints,

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Figure 4 shows the wallet of Figure 3, closed, under the same conditions,

Figure 5 is an enlargement of the detail D1 of Figure 4, and

Figure 6 shows a top view of an example of a locking system of the closure.

The device, Figures 1-6, is constituted of an envelope comprising a top opening formed of two edges joined at their ends, a front end 3 and a rear end 4, this opening being

capable of being closed by means of a flap 5 fixed to the rear wall of the envelope.

5 The opening can be sealed by means of two rigid parallel bars 6, 7, made of metal or reinforced plastic, arranged so as to be able to compress the edges 3, 4, against one another. The front bar 6 is movable and fixed to the inner surface of the flap 5 by any adequate means, whereas the rear bar 7 can be fixed either to the flap, or to the rear outer surface of the wall of the envelope 1.

10 When the flap 5 is lifted, the front bar 6 is moved apart from the rear bar and releases the opening allowing access to the inside of the device. When it is folded back, the front bar positions itself against the front edge 3 of the opening, facing the rear bar 7. The waterproofness is obtained by manually pressing the two bars against one another, and by maintaining them in this position due to locking elements arranged at the ends of these bars. By way of example, these elements can be constituted of foldable tongues 8 fixed to the flap
15 5 and provided with cutouts confining the ends of the bars 6, 7. They can also be constituted of elastic lugs 10 affixed to one of the bars and locking on the second when it is sufficiently close, the opening occurring by pressing on the lug to move it apart from the end of the bar (arrow F2, Figure 6). Any other system can be used insofar as it fulfils the same functions. In particular, a lock device can be used.

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The wall of the envelope 1 can be made out of any materials, but a waterproof material is preferably used, such as flexible plastics, rubber, or elastomer. When the texture of the envelope wall does not make it possible to obtain a good waterproofness, one can provide on the inner surface of the edges of the opening 2 at least one glued or fixed
25 compressible joint 10, which is pressed against the second joint or against the opposite edge at the time of closure of the envelope.

For large sized constructions, the edges 3, 4 of the envelope 1 can be stiffened by means of strips made of metal or synthetic material.

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The container which is the object of the invention can be in numerous forms and sizes, from the wallet to the sea bag, handbag, backpack, school satchel. It can be used to obtain waterproof pockets on bags which themselves may or may not be waterproof, it can comprise lateral bellows or can be provided with a double wall filled with air or gas enabling

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the device to float.

It must be noted that the envelope can be used as required with or without waterproofness, depending upon whether or not the locking means 8, 9 are used.

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The bars 6, 7 can possibly be mounted on a system of hinges or journalled arms guaranteeing a correct position before tightening. For certain alternative embodiments, this arrangement makes it possible to eliminate the flap 5, the locking means 8, 9 being fixed in this case to these hinges or journalled arms.

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The positioning of the various constituent elements gives the object of the invention a maximum of useful effects which had not been previously obtained by similar devices.

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